

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 H-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
MCT-01 HA-05 IO-13 AID-05 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /086 W
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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4287
INFO AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
AMCONSUL BELFAST

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 04365

E. O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PEPR, PGOV, PINT, UK, US
SUBJECT: NORTHERN IRELAND: HMG REACTION TO JOINT
STATEMENT

REF: STATE 68135

1. NORTHERN IRELAND AND FOREIGN OFFICE OFFICIALS
BELIEVE THE JOINT ST. PATRICK'S DAY STATEMENT BY
SENATORS, CONGRESSMEN AND GOVERNORS (REFTEL) WAS
"UNHELPFUL", BUT DOUBT THAT HMG WILL RESPOND TO IT
OFFICIALLY. THEIR INITIAL IMPRESSION WAS THAT NO
ONE IN LONDON IS PARTICULARLY UPSET BY IT.

2. WHILE THEY ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THE STATEMENT'S STRONG
CONDEMNATION OF VIOLENCE AND US SUPPORT THEREFOR WAS
USEFUL, THEY FELT ITS STRONG ENDORSEMENT OF IRISH UNITY
WILL ONLY DRIVE THE UNIONISTS DEEPER INTO THEIR BUNKERS
AND, AT THE SAME TIME, GIVE ENCOURAGEMENT TO THE IRA.
THEY ALSO OBSERVED THAT WHILE THE STATEMENT CORRECTLY
HIGHLIGHTED THE INTRASIGENCE OF PROTESTANT POLITICAL
LEADERS, IT FAILED TO MENTION THAT POLITICAL LEADERSHIP
OF CATHOLIC COMMUNITY TOO IS OFTEN INFLEXIBLE AND UN-
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WILLING TO COMPROMISE. FINALLY, THEY STRESSED WHAT
THEY REGARD AS THE KEY POINT: HMG IS MORALLY AND STATU-
TORILY COMMITTED TO ALLOWING THE NI PEOPLE TO CHOOSE
THEIR OWN DESTINY. WHILE HMG CAN TRY TO EDUCATE, GUIDE
AND CAJOLE THE TWO COMMUNITIES TOWARD ACCOMMODATION,
IT CANNOT IMPOSE A SOLUTION, AS THE MAY 1974 GENERAL
STRIKE DEMONSTRATED.

3. COMMENT: WE ARE INCLINED TO ACCEPT THE BRITISH
ASSESSMENT OF THE STATEMENT'S NET IMPACT. THE DEPART-
MENT MAY WISH TO POINT OUT TO THE VARIOUS SIGNATORS

IRELAND THEME ONLY BREEDS GREATER HOSTILITY AND RESIS-
TANCE AMONG PROTESTANT POLITICAL LEADERS, MAKING
ACCOMMODATION LESS RATHER THAN MORE LIKELY. WE ALSO
DOUBT THAT THE STATEMENT WILL HAVE A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
ON THE BRITISH PUBLIC, BUT SUSPECT IT WILL EXERCISE
MANY IN NI.

BREWSTER

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